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ABSTRACT

A survey of 422 faculty and interviews with 11 deans, department heads, and administrators at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst were conducted to determine faculty awareness of disability. At the time of the study, there were approximately 425 individuals with documented disabilities receiving services at the University. These included students with learning disabilities, mobility impairments, visual impairments, and hearing impairments. In the survey, 77 percent of the faculty indicated that they had taught five or fewer students with disabilities during the last 4 years. Many faculty noted that they could identify only students who disclosed their disability. To gain a better understanding of students with disabilities, faculty preferred such resources and interventions as a directory of services, faculty handbook, and campus newspaper articles, rather than workshops and open houses by service providers. Gender differences were also identified. Analysis of the data indicated that respondents lack experience teaching students with disabilities, are unfamiliar with disability rights laws, and are unfamiliar with University services for students with disabilities. Respondents were most familiar with teaching students with learning disabilities. A multimodal approach for increasing faculty awareness of disability is presented. (Contains 18 references.) (JDD)

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ED 369 208

A Study of Faculty Awareness of Students with Disabilities

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Author's note

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Abstract

This paper presents those results from a 1992 study of faculty awareness of disability that are most relevant to disability service providers in higher education. The study included a mailed survey to faculty members that yielded 422 responses and guided interviews of eleven selected deans, department heads, and administrators at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. An analysis of the data indicates that respondents lack experience teaching students with disabilities, are unfamiliar with disability rights law, and are unfamiliar with University services for students with disabilities. Respondents are most familiar with teaching students with learning disabilities. The components of a multimodal approach for increasing faculty awareness of disability are presented.

A Study of Faculty Awareness of

Students with Disabilities

The achievement of a student with a disability in higher education, even more than that of a student without a specific disability, relies heavily on the match between teacher and student . The success of the student/teacher match "includes consideration of the teacher's instructional modes, as well as the teacher's attitude" towards students with disabilities and the accommodations they require (Marchant, 1990, p.106).

Mager (1968) has said that the history of an attitude towards a subject is influenced by events that occur in relation to it. For most of our nation's history, schools were allowed to exclude children with disabilities. Since the 1960's, however, there has been an abundance of federal and state legislation that relates directly to people with disabilities. State and federal laws now protect the civil rights of people with disabilities and guarantee that all children receive a free and appropriate, public-supported education (Alexander, 1985; NICHY, 1991).

One result of federal and state legislation, most notably the Education of All Handicapped Children's Act of 1975 (P. L. 94-142), is that more students with disabilities are graduating from secondary schools and continuing to postsecondary education. Presently 10.5 percent of the nation's 12.5 million students enrolled in a postsecondary institution reported having at least one disability (HEATH, 1991). Despite these advances, students with disabilities still encounter prejudicial attitudes of faculty. This may be because the higher education environment is traditionally conservative and has a tendency to maintain the status quo (Bledstein, 1976). Furthermore, some bureaucratic administrative models in higher education negatively effect innovations and change in higher education (Hardy, 1991). Faculty members' and administrators' attitudes towards students with disabilities may affect, either positively or negatively, the academic success of these students and the postsecondary service provider's attempts to exert change.

Parks, Antonoff, Skiba, and Soberman concluded from their "Survey of Programs and Services for Learning Disabled Students in Graduate and Professional Schools" (1987) that prejudicial attitudes exist among educators and administrators at the postsecondary level. They state

that, "While it is clear that prejudicial attitudes may not change in the immediate future we, at least, would hope that individuals in higher education would minimally inspect their own values and judgments" (p. 187).

Leyser's survey (1989) found that faculty member's attitudes toward students with learning disabilities and students with emotional disabilities were less favorable than attitudes toward students with other types of disabilities. Most faculty respondents to Leyser's survey indicated they made adaptations in their courses to meet the needs of students with disabilities and were aware of disability rights laws. But less than half of the respondents used the resources and support services on campus to assist students with disabilities.

Sheridan's study at Connecticut College (1991) included a faculty questionnaire that yielded a return rate of 27% (54 faculty responding). Sheridan pointed out that "responding faculty expressed concerns about the need to increase campus physical accessibility, and to continue consciousness raising and training for the faculty" (p. 294).

The quotation of an anonymous faculty member at Massachusetts Bay Community College may be used to identify a key component in changing existing faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities:

> "The College Integration Project interested me because *I did not feel comfortable teaching learning disabled students mainly because I did not really understand what a learning disability was* [italics added]. I had heard the term used over and over again but was content believing these students were merely slow or unmotivated"
>
> (Hicks, Jacobs, & Saling, 1991, p. 13).

This current study attempts to assess the University faculty member's knowledge of disabilities, experience with educating students with disabilities, and the attitudes they possess towards students with disabilities and to determine the scope and nature of the relationship among these three factors. Information gained from the study will be useful for University service providers in developing (1) effective methods for increasing faculty member's awareness of

disability and (2) strategies for effecting a positive change in the university environment for individuals with disabilities.

The study described by this manuscript was designed to address the following research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between the faculty member's knowledge of disabilities, disability services, and disability law and the attitudes which that faculty member exhibits toward students with disabilities?
2. Is there a relationship between the faculty member's experience in teaching students with disabilities and the attitudes which that faculty member exhibits toward students with disabilities?
3. Is there a relationship between a faculty member's academic discipline and the attitudes which that faculty member exhibits toward students with disabilities?
4. Is there a relationship between a faculty member's gender and the attitudes which that faculty member exhibits towards students with disabilities?

Method

Population

The population studied was the faculty of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Established in 1863 under the original Land Grant Act, the University is the largest state institution of higher education in New England. The University offers bachelor's degrees in 92 areas, associate's degrees in eight, master's degrees in 70, and the doctorate in 48 through ten colleges and schools. There are approximately 24,100 matriculated students at the University, made up of 17,700 undergraduates and 6,400 graduates, plus more than 300 students enrolled in associate degree programs.

At the time the study was conducted, there were approximately 425 individuals with documented disabilities receiving services at the University. Among this population were 342 students with learning disabilities, 55 individuals with mobility impairments, 19 students with visual impairments, and 9 students with hearing impairments.

Sample Size

The sample size for the quantitative study was 1,149, the entire faculty of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst at the time the survey was distributed. After an initial review of the data obtained from the mailed survey identified the need for increasing faculty awareness of students with disabilities, a qualitative study was constructed for the purpose of identifying strategies for increasing faculty awareness of students with disabilities. The qualitative study was a guided interview of eleven deans, department heads, and administrators.

Distribution and Data Collection Procedures

The quantitative survey instrument was distributed through campus mail on April 17, 1992. Faculty members were asked to complete the survey and return it via campus mail prior to May 1, 1992. The cover letter included the purpose of the study, the time required to complete the study, the return date, a statement insuring respondent anonymity, and information regarding dissemination of the study's results.

The instrument was six pages in length. The cover page identified the researcher, name of the study, funding source, and address and telephone number of the researcher. The inside front cover introduced the study and its purpose, as well as defined special education terminology. Questions concerning respondent demographics were placed on the third page. Page four, titled Disability Awareness Inventory, Section I, consisted of seven questions. Page five, labeled Disability Awareness Inventory, Section II, consisted of sixteen questions and used a five point Likert scale including a "no opinion" category. The back cover contained instructions for returning the completed survey and the mailing address.

The total number of surveys returned was 429. This represented 37.33% of the faculty. A total of 275 respondents identified their departmental affiliation and represented 72 different departments. Table 1 provides the actual number of faculty and the number of faculty responses from each college and school. It also identifies each college's faculty as a percentage of the university faculty.

Insert Table 1 about here

Thirteen individuals were invited to be participants of the qualitative study. However, two individuals declined to be interviewed, one dean and one administrator. Seven of the respondents were deans, two were department heads, and two were administrators at the University. There was at least one participant representing each of the University's colleges or schools with the exception of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

The interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to 75 minutes. All but four of the interviews were held in the office of the participants. Among the participants were two persons of color, two women, and one participant from a discipline that is associated with disability issues.

Methodology

Most of the faculty surveys cited (Leyser, 1989; Matthews, 1987; Sheridan, 1991; Parks, 1987) used a direct research method employing a "Yes, No, and Don't Know " format for determining attitudes of the faculty group being studied, while Marchant (1990) used a multiple choice format.

Since an existing scale suitable for the purposes of this study was not found, a five point Likert type scale was used for the sixteen attitudinal questions using the following categories: strongly agree; agree; no opinion; disagree; and strongly disagree. Demographic and informational questions were presented as either checklists, numbers, or four point Likert scales using the following: very familiar; familiar; unfamiliar; and very unfamiliar.

The guided interview included seven questions intended to follow-up on conclusions drawn from the mailed survey. In lieu of the sixteen attitudinal questions presented by the mailed survey, a series of specific questions were asked to better gain an understanding of the participant's perceptions and feelings concerning faculty awareness of disability.

These items were constructed to allow the participants to express their views, opinions, and feelings concerning the issue presented by the question. The general questions of interest were as follows.

1. Has the college identified the need to implement disability awareness training?
2. What has been the college's level of response to increasing faculty awareness of disability?
3. What resources would faculty members use to further their understanding of disability?
4. What methods are best for delivering this information to faculty?

Results

Although there were 429 surveys returned, 422 were entered into the data base because 7 respondents answered only the demographic information or returned the survey blank. Not all of the 422 entered surveys were completely filled out. Some respondents did not answer all of the questions, resulting in different numbers of responses across the 72 items analyzed.

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they had taught five or fewer students with disabilities during the last four years. Many faculty expressed concerns that they could not identify all the students with disabilities they had taught since students need not disclose their disability. A group mean of 2.227 indicates respondents taught an estimated average of 6 students during the last four years. The variance for this data is .831 and the standard deviation is .912. Table 2 illustrates the frequency and percent of total for responses to this item.

Insert Table 2 about here

The number of faculty members who identified some experience teaching individuals with specific disabilities is displayed in Table 3. Many faculty members noted that they could identify only students who disclosed their disability, and since many disabilities are "invisible", this could skew the numbers to the negative side. Faculty respondents had the greatest experience teaching students with learning disabilities (64.69 percent) and students with physical disabilities (40.76 percent). The respondents had the least experience teaching students with known psychiatric disabilities (13.27 percent).

Insert Table 3 about here

Table 4 presents the number of respondents who identified the types of disabilities that they believed would prevent a student from entering an occupation related to the faculty member's profession.

Insert Table 4 about here

In general, more than half of the faculty members responding to the survey are unfamiliar with University support services available to students with disabilities. Table 5 presents the frequency of responses.

Insert Table 5 about here

The faculty members who responded to this survey identified their lack of familiarity with disability rights laws. Table 6 presents the self reported level of knowledge concerning five pieces of legislation and the landmark Brown v. Board of Education supreme court decision. Almost seventy-five percent of the respondents are unfamiliar with Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilitiies Act of 1990.

Insert Table 6 about here

Respondents were asked to identify resources or interventions which would aid them in gaining a better understanding of students with disabilities. Table 7 lists the number and percentage of faculty members who identified the listed resources as being potentially helpful. Among the suggestions under the category of "other" were discussions at faculty meetings, routing reading materials through campus mail, articles in the student newspaper, adaptive computer laboratories, mentor programs, communicating with colleagues with disabilities, and communicating with students with disabilities.

Insert Table 7 about here

Overall, I would interpret the faculty members' response to the survey's attitudinal questions as being supportive of students with disabilities. Based upon the percentage and mean scores of the 16 attitudinal questions as displayed in Table 8, respondents are supportive of making educational accommodations for students with disabilities.

Insert Table 8 about here

The survey had a higher representation of females responding compared to the percentage of the sample population. One-third of the respondents were female compared to 22.6 percent of the University faculty being female. Also, 47 percent of the female faculty responded to the survey, as illustrated in Table 9. This could skew the overall response to the positive. English (1971) concluded females have more supportive attitudes toward disability than do males, but that race, age, and nationality are not related to attitudes toward people with disabilities. Fichten (1988) cites additional studies that conclude women have more favorable attitudes towards individuals with disabilities than do men. English's research negates the influence that age would have on faculty attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Insert Table 9 about here

Table 10 compares the percentage of response to three selected, representative attitudinal questions by gender.

Insert Table 10 about here

An analysis of variance was performed for gender and attitudinal questions 4, 6, and 10. The ANOVA supports the prior research findings and shows a difference between female and male

respondents' answers to attitudinal questions. All three attitudinal questions have calculated F scores that are significant at the .01 level or less.

Discussion

Conclusions

This study's participants were generally unfamiliar with disabilities, students with disabilities, University disability service providers, and disability laws. At the that the study was conducted, the University administration had not identified the need to implement a disability awareness program, and very few interventions had been initiated to increase faculty awareness of students with disabilities. However, based upon the responses to the survey questions, participants of both studies should be seen as being supportive of students with disabilities.

The following is a list of general conclusions drawn from the data collected by the Study of Faculty Awareness of Students with Disabilities.

1. The respondents have had limited experience in teaching students with disabilities (77% have taught five or fewer students with disabilities over the past four years.
2. Respondents are most familiar (over 64% of those who have taught students with disabilities) with teaching students with learning disabilities.
3. Respondents are most accepting of wheelchair users and individuals with hearing impairments, and are most concerned about individuals with psychiatric disabilities and individuals with communication disorders entering their professions.
4. Between 50 and 75 percent of the respondents are unfamiliar with the different University services which may help students with disabilities.
5. The respondents are unfamiliar with disability rights legislation and litigation (based upon the following percentage of respondents that identified themselves as being unfamiliar, or very unfamiliar with the following laws and court rulings: 62% - *Brown*; 89%- Section 504; and 74% - ADA).
6. Female respondents had more favorable attitudes towards students with disabilities than did their male counterparts.

7. Based upon the percentage and mean scores of the attitudinal questions, respondents are supportive of making educational accommodations for students with disabilities.

The nature of qualitative research makes it difficult to draw general conclusions from the participants' responses to questions asked during the guided interviews. The eleven participants expressed varied opinions to the seven questions posed to them during the course of the interview sessions. However, one may draw conclusions based upon data that reflected the opinions or experiences of the majority of the participants. Given this, the following is a list of observations and conclusions drawn from the qualitative data.

1. Participants possess a basic understanding of issues pertaining to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities. Also, participants felt that the faculty members of their school or college were supportive of making educational accommodations for students with disabilities.
2. The respondents, all of whom are administrative leaders at the University, have not identified the need to implement disability awareness training for faculty.
3. Most participants indicated nothing had been done to increase the faculty's knowledge of the needs of students with disabilities.
4. Interventions, or strategies, that could be employed to further educate faculty about disability and related issues should be tailored to the specific needs faculty of each school or college.
5. A multimodal approach should be adopted for presenting information concerning disability to the faculty. This is based upon the fact that most participants suggested a variety of types of preferred methods, many that would be deemed traditional, for presenting information to faculty.
6. Most faculty would respond positively to disability training activities if they have identified the need to learn more about people with disabilities.

Discussion

At first glance, the response to this survey seems very positive. Upon reflection, however, it produces some very disturbing questions for service providers at the University. Three primary areas of concern are 1) the level of knowledge, experience, and attitudes of the faculty who did not respond to the survey, 2) the information about which the respondents were not aware, and 3) the manner in which respondents wish to obtain further information regarding disabilities.

It may be that faculty members who possess prejudicial attitudes towards individuals with disabilities would not respond to a survey such as this, or that respondents may provide data that they think the researcher seeks (Antonak & Livneh, 1988). It could also be that non-respondents did not want to be bothered with completing the survey because of time constraints or for other reasons.

The disproportionate number of female faculty members responding is troublesome because they are also a minority in most departments on campus and particularly so in the sciences where disability service personnel at the University believe many students with disabilities encounter problems with faculty members. Also, it may be that female faculty members are more understanding of students with disabilities because they too, have experienced discrimination.

Fichten (1988) wrote, "There is relatively little research of attitudes of professors towards students with disabilities. What little research exists suggests that professors have moderately favorable attitudes towards disabled students on campus but their attitudes are somewhat less positive about having such students in their own department" (p. 177).

Although the responses to the attitudinal questions were generally positive, the respondents were not familiar with students with disabilities or services which provide support for students with disabilities. If respondents were truly supportive of students with disabilities, perhaps, they would be more familiar with support services.

Recommendations

The breadth of the mailed survey facilitated the narrowing of the focus for the topic to be explored during the structured interviews. While the mailed survey was originally intended as the

primary research effort of the study, the qualitative research added an unforeseen depth to the research and provided valuable information necessary for formulating recommendations for increasing faculty awareness of disability. The mailed survey essentially identified the problem and the qualitative interviews then focused upon the problem and looked for possible solutions for effecting change as proposed by the study's participants.

It appears respondents to the mailed survey choose the most passive and impersonal interventions and activities that would provide them with more information concerning disabilities, such as newspaper articles and newsletters. The choice of written information may stem from the fact that faculty are most accustomed to requesting and dealing with information in this manner. But, these interventions may not affect attitudinal change or increase familiarity with individuals with disabilities. In fact, faculty do not seem to be attending to the information in print since many of the interventions listed already exist (e. g., 33% of the respondents would like a campus access guide that is presently available). Also, information about services is already printed in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, the campus telephone book, and in the newspapers on an on-going basis. It appears that these means have not increased the faculty's knowledge of disabilities and related services.

An element common to both research methods was that the research effort became an intervention for increasing faculty awareness of disability. I believe that in a university setting, this notion of 'research as an intervention' may prove to be valuable in the future. The mailed survey was designed, not only to collect information that would address the study's four research questions, but also to disseminate information concerning disability. Although the qualitative study was not designed to heighten awareness of disability, it was very apparent before, during, and after each interview that the interview was an intervention. By simply bringing up these issues and discussing them, it seemed that each participant exhibited an 'ah-ha' moment of understanding. The point should not be overlooked, or undervalued, that the participants of the qualitative study are also administrators within the university organization who may have the ability to initiate change strategies.

The difficulty of changing faculty attitudes toward individuals with disabilities may lie in the fact that faculty members belong to their own professional organizations and have professional identities separate from the university structure. They do not attend to the University as an entity and they do not attend to the professional bureaucracy of a university (Hardy, 1991).

Change in faculty attitudes and knowledge of disabilities may not be possible until the time comes when faculty need to learn about the ADA vis a vis their professional constituents, e. g., engineers, hotel managers, etc. Also, not until exposure to people with disabilities in the professions is widespread will faculty note the need to train those with disabilities to enter their discipline. The ADA will probably have a large effect on professional schools for this reason.

In order to effect a change in a higher educational environment, all participants must exhibit an interest in the change effort. The groups most affected in this situation are: students with disabilities, faculty, professional staff, and university administrators.

One respondent suggested, during a qualitative interview, that a mutilayered approach should be employed to increase awareness of disability. By this, the person meant that information should be presented to all level of employees at the University. Taking this concept one step further, training should be offered to university personnel utilizing a variety of methods, or modes.

It is worthwhile to note that faculty engage in collegiality or professional authority (Hardy, 1991). However, the administrators who initiate change in such an organization tend to establish ad hoc committees that study the issues and make recommendations, a slow process that often results in little change from the status quo. A more effective method for producing change may be for disability service providers to view the university as an entity unto itself that will require a multimodal planning process for change, via the central administration, ad hoc committees (e.g., the affirmative action committee), employee unions, the faculty senate, departments, advising practices, and individual faculty. Components of this multilayered, multimodal approach may include the following interventions.

1. Identifying and training colleague advocates within each department. One way of doing this could be to send a letter to each department head requesting 1) voluntary participation, or 2) appointment of a knowledgeable faculty member. Training could be ongoing through an advocacy network newsletter and could include a general meeting each semester for the purpose of providing advocates with updated information concerning legislation or program changes. An important component would be to publicize the existence of the network and to encourage both faculty and students to utilize the expertise of the advocates as both resource persons and mediators. University administrators should be included in the training program.
2. Introducing faculty concerns to students with disabilities by disability services providers. Included in this effort should be educating students with disabilities to the variety of faculty attitudes that they may encounter, the daily responsibilities that faculty have, and the stress that faculty undergo at different times during year. Discussions could include such topics as how faculty may view a student's self-disclosure. This training could take place annually and be offered by both the disability service providers and the Provost's Office and could also include a peer advocacy component.
3. Round table discussions by representatives of disability services to be conducted during department meetings. This intervention could be seen as a 'get acquainted' type of activity. The format should be informal in nature with the purpose of informing faculty of the types of services available to students and faculty, the service provider's philosophy, policy, and procedures for delivery of services to students, and providing faculty an opportunity to ask questions concerning disability related issues.
4. Creation of an E-Mail bulletin board for disability related information and consultation. Although this medium is presently not universally in use, it will be in the future. This may be a very effective strategy for relaying information in an inexpensive and modern way.

5. Arranging for graduate students with disabilities to present disability related issues at orientation programs for TA's and RA's. Many problems for students with disabilities have come from teaching assistants and residential advisors. These problems stem from a lack of knowledge about disabilities rather than an unwillingness to understand. Enlisting graduate students with disabilities to provide training during graduate teaching seminars may prevent many problems.

6. Publishing articles in the faculty and student newspapers which personalize disability issues and experiences by faculty and professionals with disabilities. This intervention personalizes disability for the faculty. It is an effort to help faculty members understand the impact that disability has on the lives of students.

7. Creating and distributing a 'Handbook on Disability'. This handbook could include such information as a description of services and the delivery of those services to students and a description of disabilities and accommodations that enable the student to compete 'on a level playing field' with their peers. The handbook should be distributed to all faculty and administrators to be used as a reference.

8. ADA workshops. A series of monthly, hour-long, workshops could be offered to interested faculty. Enrollment should be limited to encourage audience participation.

9. Creation of a University Committee on Disability. Representatives from departments, service providers, and administrative units should meet biannually for the purpose of planning policy for increasing faculty awareness of disability.

In order for any recommendations to become effective interventions for changing the level of faculty awareness of students with disabilities, the university administration must publicly acknowledge the need for such training and then support the implementation of such efforts. Acknowledgment and support must be initiated from the highest level of management and would be most effective if the entire university system were included. This policy should not take the form of an understood, or implicit, commitment, but should be undertaken as a written

commitment by the University. This commitment should include an annual financial commitment and an identified delivery system.

As with most educational research, problems and limitations in research design are a matter of course. Given this, the following is a list of the limitations of this research.

1. The conclusions drawn from the data gathered on the population being surveyed may not be generalizable to other institutions. This could be due to differences as influenced by: size, scope, or mission of the institution; demography of the faculty; regional and institutional history; predominant regional religions; racial and ethnic make-up of the region; and the political climate of the institution or region.
2. In registering attitudes towards people with disabilities, people generally do not verbalize, or express, negative feelings (Cook, 1992).
3. The findings are self-reported data and not independently verified by another researcher.
4. The respondent may endorse only those items on an attitude scale that he or she considers to represent the socially appropriate or sanctioned response, a tendency referred to as social desirability.
5. The faculty are knowledgeable about survey techniques and instrument design and are not likely to respond to an instrument whose purpose is to measure their attitudes towards a minority group.
6. The research included all degrees and types of disabilities and the heterogeneous nature of disabilities may have skewed the response of the respondents. A respondent may have been familiar with specific types of disabilities or specific levels of severity of disabilities that could affect the responses.
7. The survey may have sensitized respondents to an attitude domain of which they have a nebulous view and, therefore, create nonexistent attitudes that the researcher interprets as significant (Antonak & Livneh, 1988).

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Table 1

Comparison of Response by College

College	Total College Faculty	Number of Respondents	Percent of College Faculty	Percent of Response	Percent of University Faculty
Humanities and Fine Arts	339	101	29.79%	23.93%	25.8%
Natural Sciences and Mathematics	173	80	46.24%	18.96%	13.2%
Social and Behavioral Sciences	295	73	24.75%	17.30%	22.2%
Food and Natural Resources	176	67	38.07%	15.88%	13.4%
Education	73	28	38.36%	6.64%	5.5%
Engineering	102	17	16.66%	4.03%	7.8%
Public Health	30	13	43.33%	3.08%	2.3%
Nursing	25	12	48.00%	2.84%	1.9%
Physical Education	23	11	47.82%	2.61%	1.7%
Management	60	9	15.00%	2.13%	4.6%
Other	20	11	55.00%	2.60%	1.6%
Total	1,316	422	N/A	100.00%	100.00%

(Note: Total College Faculty *includes* faculty members on sabbatical and leave of absence. Total University Faculty on campus at time of survey was 1,149.)

Table 2

Number of Students with Disabilities Taught During The Last Four Years

Number of Students	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	>16
Faculty Response	61	251	59	22	17
Percent	14.88	61.21	14.39	5.37	4.15

(N = 410)

Table 3

Faculty Experience Teaching Individuals with Disabilities by Type of Disability

Type of Disability	Number Yes	Percentage
Learning disabled	273	64.69
Physically disabled	172	40.76
Hearing impaired	117	27.73
Communication disorder	115	27.25
Vision impaired	109	25.83
Psychiatrically disabled	56	13.27

(N = 422)

Table 4

Disability Considered an Insurmountable Barrier to a Student's Entrance into Occupations Associated with Faculty Profession

Type of Disability	Number Yes	Percentage
Psychiatrically disabled	84	19.91
Communication disorder	69	16.35
Learning disabled	58	13.74
Vision impaired	54	12.80
Hearing impaired	23	5.45
Physically disabled	18	4.27

(N = 422)

Table 5

Faculty Knowledge of University Services

Very Familiar	Familiar	Unfamiliar	Very Unfamiliar	University Service
14	59	130	210	The admissions process for students with learning disabilities
22	129	116	146	The Center for Counseling & Academic Development
14	97	149	155	The Division of Counseling Psychology Service
51	167	96	101	Learning Disabled Student Services
32	170	112	101	Mental Health Services
46	137	123	109	Mather Career Center
18	93	133	171	The Office of Disability Services

Table 6

Faculty Knowledge of Legislation and Litigation

Very Familiar	Familiar	Unfamiliar	Very Unfamiliar	Legislation/Court Decision
52	101	93	159	*Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)
18	28	136	226	Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973
28	78	105	197	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Table 7

Resources Which Faculty Would Most Likely Use to Gain a Better Understanding of Students with Disabilities

Resource/Intervention	Number Yes	Percentage
Directory of services and resources	282	66.82
Faculty handbook	231	54.74
Campus Chronicle articles	180	42.65
Newsletter by service providers	158	37.44
Campus access guide	139	32.94
Organizational flowchart of services	102	24.17
Workshops by service providers	69	16.35
Open houses by service providers	30	7.11
Other	22	5.21
(N = 422)		

Table 8

Frequency of Responses to Attitudinal Questions

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The presence of an interpreter for a student with a hearing impairment is a distraction in the classroom.	8 1.9%	57 13.5%	66 15.6%	145 34.4%	138 32.7%
2. Practitioners and employers in my discipline actively recruit disabled people.	6 1.4%	42 10%	97 23%	193 45.7%	75 17.8%
3. A greater portion of class time is needed to teach to the needs of students with disabilities.	11 2.6%	135 32%	95 22.5%	149 35.3%	20 4.7%
4. Having students with disabilities in the classroom takes away from the quality of education other students receive.	2 .5%	18 4.3%	46 11%	199 47.2%	148 35.1%

(Continued on next page)

Table 8. Continued.

5. Additional resources should be allocated to increase the level of support services at the University for students with disabilities	39 9.2%	117 27.7%	203 48.1%	43 10.2%	10 2.4%
6. Making educational accommodations for students with disabilities, such as allowing a learning disabled student to take un-timed examinations, compromises the integrity of the curriculum.	6 1.4%	27 6.4%	21 5%	185 43.8%	176 42.7%
7. People with disabilities have fewer employment opportunities than other adults.	90 21.3%	252 59.7%	43 10.2%	25 5.9%	6 1.4%
8. A classroom's location should be changed to provide accessibility for a disabled student.	125 29.6%	210 49.7%	46 10.9%	26 6.2%	6 1.4%
9. The form of an exam should be altered if the testing procedure puts a disabled student at a disadvantage.	89 21.1%	192 45.5%	47 11.2%	63 14.9%	19 4.5%
10. Providing special aids and services for students with disabilities in the classroom is likely to impinge upon the instructor's academic freedom.	4 .95%	15 3.6%	45 10.7%	196 46.7%	153 36.3%
11. A student with an speech disorder should be given an alternate assignment to presenting an oral report.	90 21.3%	199 47.2%	71 16.8%	47 11.2%	8 1.9%
12. Certain college or departmental requirements should be modified for students with disabilities, such as waiving a foreign language requirement for a deaf student, to ensure equal educational opportunity.	68 16.1%	148 35.1%	86 21.4%	92 21.8%	19 4.5%
13. The instructor should alter his or her teaching style to enhance communication with students with disabilities.	44 10.4%	201 47.6%	83 19.7%	76 18%	8 1.9%
14. Students with learning disabilities should be enrolled in a discipline other than mine.	7 1.7%	17 4%	56 13.3%	176 41.7%	158 37.4%
15. Background information concerning a student's disability should be provided to the instructor before the course begins.	153 36.3%	190 45%	41 9.7%	26 6.2%	2 .5%

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Table 8. Continued.

16. Providing additional support services for students with disabilities inhibits the development of self-reliance and independence.	4 .9%	18 4.3%	78 18.5%	220 52.1%	95 22.5%

Table 9

Frequency and Percentage of Respondents by Gender

	Respondents		Total Faculty		Percent of
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total Faculty
Females	141	33.4%	298	22.6%	47%
Males	274	64.9%	1,018	77.4%	27%
Not Reported	7	1.7%	-	-	-
Total	422	100%	1,316	100%	32%

Table 10

Comparison of Percentage of Response to Attitudinal Questions by Gender

	Question 4			Question 6			Question 10		
Degree	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Strongly Agree	.71	.36	.47	1.42	1.09	1.42	1.42	.73	.95
Agree	1.42	5.48	4.27	4.26	7.66	6.40	2.13	4.38	3.55
No Opinion	8.51	12.41	10.90	3.55	5.84	4.98	5.67	13.50	10.66
Disagree	39.01	51.82	47.16	35.46	48.54	43.84	44.68	48.18	46.45
Strongly Disagree	48.23	27.37	35.07	52.48	35.77	41.71	43.26	31.75	36.49

N = 422 (Female = 141, Male = 274, Non-respondents = 7)

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